

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department of Social Services (765)

Service Area 14 of 33

Eligibility Determination Local Staff and Operations (765 460 03)**Description**

This service area funds the eligibility determination of Virginia's safety net programs, a service conducted by local departments of social services. The safety net programs include: the Commonwealth's largest nutrition assistance program, the Food Stamp Program; financial assistance programs including Auxiliary Grants, the Energy Assistance Program, the General Relief Program, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF); and medical assistance programs (FAMIS, Medicaid, State and Local Hospitalization, and the low-income subsidy for the Medicare prescription drug plans). There are 120 local departments of social services at 150 physical locations throughout the Commonwealth.

Background Information**Mission Alignment and Authority**

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

This service area supports the mission of the Department through the administration of programs that help individuals meet their basic human needs. These financial, nutrition, and medical services help individuals move out of poverty and build strong families and communities. Often, this service area is the first point of contact for the individual/family in the social services system, and the financial assistance provided by the services area stabilizes the family, enabling them to pursue additional services targeted at improving their financial status and overcoming poverty.

- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

Statutory authority for all this service area is found in the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended §63.2-200-63.2-336. This section of the Code gives local departments of social services the responsibility to determine eligibility and perform the necessary case management services for these safety net programs.

Customers

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
Individuals, Children and Families (served unknown; potential unlimited)	Low-income individuals and families	1,630,000	0

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

From 2000 to 2003 (most recent Census data), the number of Virginians living in poverty increased 28%, with 740,000 Virginians now living below the federal poverty threshold. This change is likely to increase the number of eligible households and the number of applicants for the program.

The Food Stamp program has experienced continual caseload growth in the last three years, resulting from increases in the number of Virginians living in poverty and aggressive outreach activities to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program.

Partners

Partner	Description
Local Departments of Social Services	
State Agencies	(State partners are the Departments of Medical Assistance Services, Vocational and Rehabilitative Services, Motor Vehicles, and the Employment Commission.)
Virginia Institute for Social Services Training Activities (VISSTA)	
Virginia's Covering Families and Children Coalition	

Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

The principal factors impacting the products and services provided by this service area include changes in federal and state legislation and the increasing workload at local departments of social services resulting from increased program caseloads.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

One of the biggest challenges of this service area is the efforts of policy makers at both the national and state levels to make policy changes to reduce poverty. This service area must respond to these changes while maintaining continuity for our customers. Similarly federal changes to the TANF program and state efforts to reduce the number of children without adequate health insurance will create additional demands on the service area.

Additionally, the current movement toward efficiency and program simplification will continue. All program applications are moving on-line, and customers will have increasing flexibility to access programs and services without having to come into a local department of social services. Using the web, points of access and the level of program information will increase.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Support of organizations serving communities
- Economic assistance to low income families/individuals or nutrition, child care, health care eligibility, and financial assistance to low income families/individuals

Finance

- Financial Overview*

Funding for this service area comes from a combination of federal, state and local funds. The Code of Virginia §63.2-400 specified that no less than 50 percent of the funding necessary to administer public assistance program shall come from federal and state funds. By action of the State Board of Social Services, the funding split for local administration is 50 percent federal fund, 30 percent general fund, and 20 percent local fund. The federal funds come from various federal grant sources including Food Stamps, Medicaid, TANF, Title IV-E Foster Care, and the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). This base appropriation also includes federal funds for local administration pass thru and local service cost allocation expenditures as well as \$1,500,000 in fraud funds (fund 0911) to support the Fraud program.

- Financial Breakdown*

	Fiscal Year 2009		Fiscal Year 2010	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$48,359,926	\$108,619,365	\$48,359,926	\$108,619,365
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Service Area Total	\$48,359,926	\$108,619,365	\$48,359,926	\$108,619,365

Service Area Objectives

- Perform timely and accurate eligibility determination services for safety net programs

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Maximize the economic independence, safety and stability of individuals and families
- Agency Goal: Deliver high-quality customer-focused services

Objective Measures

- Percent of Food Stamp cases processed within federal timeliness standards

Governor's Key:

No

Measure Type:

Output

Measure Frequency:

Annual

Frequency Comment: % of FS cases processed timely

Measure Baseline: 98% of Food Stamp cases were processed within federal timeliness standards in FFY 2005

Measure Target: 98% of Food Stamp cases will be processed within federal timeliness standards by the end of FFY 2010

Data Source and Calculation: Timeliness is captured from ADAPT and is calculated in relation to the federal standard.